

White House Memos Reveal Big Milk Producers Campaign Pledge

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Three White House memos filed in connection with consumer advocate Ralph Nader's suit to roll back milk support prices revealed today that milk producers promised \$90,000 a month to President Nixon's 1972 campaign.

Gordon C. Strachan, liaison between the reelection campaign and then-White House chief of staff H. R. Haldeman, reported to Haldeman in a Sept. 11, 1971, memo that the milk producers had contributed \$232,500 by that time—only half of the commitment.

About six months earlier, Nixon met with dairy leaders and the administration increased the federal support price on raw milk to 85 per cent of parity.

Nader filed suit several months ago to roll back the

increase on grounds it was politically influenced. The White House contended in a "white paper" earlier this month that it raised the support price for economic reasons and because the Democratic Congress had "put a gun to our heads" for an even larger increase.

The White House also said the milk co-operatives gave \$437,-

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000 to the campaign, although it acknowledged the industry had indicated it tried to raise \$2 million.

Lee Nunn reports that \$232,500 has been realized. This is slightly more than one-half of the amount that should have been delivered on the commitment, \$90,000 per month.

"It is Nunn and Sloan's opinion that Colson has established a separate agreement with the milk people in order to have cash available. I have not checked with Colson as this may be an agreement outside my area of responsibility.

"If the alleged Colson agreement has your approval the matter will be dropped. If it does not you may want to reemphasize your policy of single contact. Kalmbach, with all contributors."

Nunn and Hugh W. Sloan were reelection aides.

A spokesman for Nader said the White House turned over the memos as "a representative sampling of the documents" involved in the suit.

The memos, all from Strachan to Haldeman, included:

A Sept. 16, 1971, memo saying that then-White House special counsel Charles W. Colson, a liaison with the dairy industry, had made a special arrangement to obtain \$5,000 in cash from the milk producers.

It has been speculated that the \$5,000 eventually was used to finance the 1971 break-in at the office of Pentagon Papers defendant Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist.

A Feb. 1, 1972, memo saying that Herbert W. Kalmbach, Nixon's fund-raiser and personal lawyer, was "very concerned about his involvement in the milk producers situation" because of press disclosures linking Jack Gleason, a former White House aide, and the 1970 campaign funding.

The Sept. 11, 1971, memo about the \$232,500. On it, Haldeman told Strachan to check Colson as to whether he "has established a separate agreement with the milk people in order to have cash available."